A

REPRESENTATION

Of the Preſent

State of Religion,

With regard to the late exceſſive Growth of

Infidelity, Hereſy, & Profaneneſs:

Unanimouſly Agreed upon by a Joint Committee of

Both Houſes of Convocation,

OF THE

Province of *CANTERBURY*,

AND

Afterwards rejected by the Upper Houſe, but Paſſed in the Lower Houſe.

Members of the Committee.

The Bps. of	*Peterborough*	Dr. *Atterbury*, Prol.	Dr. *Aſhton*
	Landaff	Dr. *Stanhope*	Dr. *Smalridge*
	Bangor	Dr. *Godolphin*	Dr. *Altham*
	St. *Aſaph*	Dr. *Willis*	Dr. *Sydell*
	St. *Davids.*	Dr. *Gaſtrell*	Archd. *Brideock.*

London Printed: And, Re-printed and Sold by *Edward Waters*, *DUBLIN*, 1711. Price 3d.

A

REPRESENTATION

Of the Prelates

State of Religion,

Impudently, Heretically, & Profanely

both Spiritual & Temporal

Province of CANTERBURY

Affronts & rejected by the Upper House

Passed in the Lower House

Members of the Convocation

The Bps. of { Peterborough, Londᵈ, Ely, St. Asaph, St. David.

London Printed: And, Re-printed and Sold by Jacob Tonson

May it pleaſe Your Majeſty,

WE, the Archbiſhop, the Biſhops, and the Clergy of the Province of Canterbury, *in Convocation aſſembled, are deeply ſenſible of the many Bleſſings and Advantages of Your Gracious and proſperous Reign, Amongſt which, there is none that more affects us, than the tender Care and Concern ſhewn by your Majeſty for the flouriſhing State of Religion, and the Godly Zeal you have expreſs'd againſt the wicked Practices of Thoſe, who, by looſe and profane Principles, openly propagated among your Subjects, have endeavour'd to undermine and deſtroy it.*

We are thankful to Almighty God, who hath put it into Your Royal Heart to repreſs theſe daring and impious Attempts; and, for that End, to call upon Your Clergy for their Counſel and Aſſiſtance.

It is, on many Accounts, our Duty, to do the utmoſt that in us lies, toward promoting ſo excellent a Work. We have, therefore, apply'd our ſelves with Diligence to conſider the Matters to us referr'd; and do now, in Obedience to Your Royal Commands, humbly lay before your Majeſty,

A REPRESENTATION of the preſent State of Religion among Us, with regard to the late exceſſive Growth of Infidelity, Hereſy, and Profaneneſs.

WE cannot, without unſpeakable Grief, reflect on that Deluge of Impiety and Licentiouſneſs, which hath broke in upon us, and overſpread the Face of this Church and Kingdom; eminent, in former times, for Purity of Faith, and Sobriety of Manners.

The Source of theſe great Evils, as far back as we have trac'd it, ſeems to have been, that long unnatural Rebellion, which looſen'd all the Bands of Diſcipline and Order, and overturn'd the goodly Frame of our Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Conſtitution.

The Hypocriſy, Enthuſiaſm, and variety of wild and monſtrous Errors, which abounded, during thoſe Confuſions, begat in the Minds of Men (too eaſily carried into Extremes) a diſregard for the very Appearances of Religion, and ended in a Spirit of downright Libertiniſm and Profaneneſs, which hath ever-ſince too much prevail'd among us. It was, indeed, check'd, and kept Under, for a time, by the Legal Reſtraints laid on the Preſs, and by the juſt dread of Popery, which hung over our Heads: But, as ſoon as theſe Fears were removed, and thoſe Reſtraints were taken off, it broke out with the greateſt Freedom and Violence.

There have not been wanting, God be praiſed, the hearty Endeavours of good Men to reſiſt the Growth of theſe ſpreading Evils. Books have been written in defence of the Fundamental Truths, whether of natural or reveal'd Religion, with great Clearneſs, and Strength of Argument; the vain Pleas of the ſeveral Advocates for Infidelity have been particularly conſider'd and refuted; Societies have been form'd, and Funds of Charity rais'd, for the Propagation of our holy Faith, for the pious Education of poor Children, and for the Increaſe of Chriſtian Knowledge, by plain and uſeful Diſcourſes, diſtributed among the meaner Sort, in great Variety and Number. Authority hath often interpos'd, for the countenancing theſe excellent Deſigns, for withſtanding the bold Artempts, and preventing the farther Increaſe of Irreligion and Profaneneſs. To this end, Royal Injunctions and Proclamations have iſſued, Acts of Parliament have paſſed, Proſecutions at Law have been ordered, gracious Speeches from the Throne have been made, and from thence ſuch bright Patterns of Piety and Vertue have ſhone forth, as would, in any Age, leſs profligate than this, have diffus'd their happy Influence thro' all Orders of Men among us.

But

But it must be confess'd, that all the Endeavours which may hitherto have been used, by publick or private Persons, to stop the Growth of this Evil, have prov'd ineffectual. In the midst of such Discouragements Infidelity hath taken deep Root, and being cultivated with Care, hath spread its Branches wide, and shot up to an amazing height, and brought forth Fruits in great abundance.

We forbear to wound your Pious Ears by a particular mention of those many blasphemous passages, which have been publish'd from the Press. Nevertheless, in discharge of the Trust repos'd in us by your Majesty, we think our selves oblig'd to lay before You some Account of the various steps taken to undermine the Foundations of Christianity, and to infect the Minds of your People, with Atheism, Deism, Heresy, and every pernicious and destructive Error. We shall proceed afterwards to consider the Dark and Subtile *Methods*, by which this Mystery of Iniquity hath been carry'd on; to Enquire into the *Causes* which have chiefly and most immediately given Birth to it, and into the sad *Consequences* with which it has been attended; and then in all humility to propose such *Remedies*, as, we think, may be most effectual for the Cure of it.

The Dispute with our Enemies of the Church of *Rome* (manag'd with so much Honour and Advantage to the Church of *England*) was no sooner happily ended, but other Adversaries arose, who openly attack'd the Fundamental Articles of the Catholick Faith, and scatter'd the Poyson of *Arrian* and *Socinian* Heresies thro' all parts of this Kingdom. The Doctrine of a Trinity of Persons, in the Unity of the God-head was then deny'd and Scoff'd at, the Satisfaction made for the Sins of Mankind by the precious blood of Christ was renounced and exploded; the Ancient Creeds of the Church were represented as unwarrantable Impositions, and treated with Terms of the utmost Contumely and Reproach. And the Divulgers of these wicked Errors and Blasphemies proceeded with as little Disguise and Caution, as if some new Law had been made in their Favour; notwithstanding that Care had been taken

by

by thoſe, who paſs'd the Act of Indulgence, expreſly to exclude Them from the Benefit of it.

In defiance of this Act, and of all the Laws then in Force, they not only own'd their peſtilent Errors, but ſet up for making Proſelytes, by a multitude of wicked Books and Pamphlets, which for ſome years, they diſpers'd from the Preſs, without Control or Diſcouragement.

They at laſt proceeded ſo far, as even to ſet up a Religious Aſſembly, where Divine Worſhip was publickly perform'd, in a way agreeable to the Principles of the *Unitarians*, and weekly Sermons were preach'd in Defence of them.

Nor have theſe Hereticks been with-held, by the publick Notice lately taken of their wicked Poſitions, from venting them anew, and with yet greater boldneſs. Even at the time when we are thus met by Your Majeſty's Writ, and exhorted by your Gracious Letter to conſult of methods for repreſſing ſuch Impieties, a Book hath been Printed, wherein the *Arrian* Doctrine is avow'd and maintain'd, and a Promiſe is made of evincing the Truth of it, by large and elaborate Proofs in other Treaties, from the ſame Hand, which are ſoon to follow. To this Book the Author hath prefix'd his Name, and hath not been afraid to Dedicate it to the Archbiſhop, Biſhops and Clergy of this Province in Convocation aſſembled; being, as we have ſome Reaſon to believe, ſupported in this Undertaking, and encourag'd to proſecute it, by the liberal Contributions, and inſidious Applauſes of *Thoſe*, who are the determin'd Enemies of all Religion and Goodneſs.

It was by ſuch Men as theſe that the *Socinian* Tracts, when firſt publiſh'd were much countenanc'd and recommended: For they well knew, that the chief Articles of the Chriſtian Faith being once ſhaken, a Way would by that means be open'd, and the Minds of Men prepar'd, for the Attacks, which might afterwards be made on Chriſtianity it ſelf; and into which the *Socinian* Controverſy ſoon was improv'd.

For

Signatures of Truth; and easier to be contemn'd, than disprov'd, upon the Foot of the Arguments urg'd in behalf of the Truth of Christianity.

They have, with Ostentation, enumerated the several Spurious Treatises, forg'd in the earliest Ages of the Church; which they represent as Times of great Fraud and Imposture, on the one hand; of great Ignorance and Credulity, on the other; and they have left this Reflection to be apply'd, by their Readers, to the Books of the new Testament, and the Authors of them.

The Promises of Scripture have, by one of these Writers, been Interpreted, in such an Extravagant and absurd Sense, as was intended to render them uncertain, and unintelligible; and a Plea hath been advanced in behalf of the Privilege of being translated to Heaven, without dying, according to the Terms of the Covenant of Grace, with a design to insinuate, that our Title to the other Privileges, and Promises of the Gospel, is founded on no surer a bottom.

Under the Cover of accounting for the growth of Deism, and specifying the Causes of it, they have taken occasion to suggest all those bitter and spiteful Reflections, which, they thought, might redound to the dishonour of our holy Religion, and wound it through the Sides of its profess'd Servants and Followers.

Their receiv'd Maxim is, that *no Good is to be expected from Ecclesiasticks, but by their Divisions:* and, therefore, if Differences happen at any time to arise among the Clergy, their constant practice hath been, to foment and inflame them, by turning Advocates for the one side against the other; whereas, in Truth, they themselves were alike Enemies to both, and were also in like manner detested by both of them.

When particular and unwarrantable Opinions have at any time been maintain'd, by Men otherwise eminent for Piety and Learning, the Friends of Infidelity have not fail'd to lay hold of that Opportunity, and improve it to the prejudice of Religion. Those very Person, whose Learned Labours in defence of our Common Faith they had before undervalu'd, and held in utmost contempt, they began now to extol, and pretended to revere for the sake of their Errors; their deep Judgment they admir'd, their Integrity they magnify'd, and appeal'd to their Authority, as decisive, in favour of a Paradox, when they wou'd have refus'd to be concluded by it in any other Point whatsoever.

We pretend not to have made a full Diſcovery of all the dark and ſubtle Wiles, by which the Inſtruments of Satan have endeavour'd to eſtabliſh his Kingdom, and to introduce a general Looſeneſs of Principles and Practices among us: But theſe, which We have now laid before your Majeſty, are too obvious and manifeſt, not to be obſerv'd and complain'd of by us.

However, neither theſe, nor any other wicked Arts and Methods, how craftily ſoever contriv'd, and how induſtriouſly ſoever purſu'd, would have met with ſo remarkable Succeſs, had not other CAUSES and Circumſtances concurr'd to help forward the Event, and favour the Growth of irreligious Opinions.

Among the chief of theſe, we reckon, the Removal of that Reſtraint, which the Wiſdom of former Times had laid upon the Preſs; and which no ſooner ceas'd, than thoſe pernicious Principles, that before had been whiſper'd only in Corners, among the Diſſolute and Lawleſs, were now proclaim'd in our Streets, and ſent abroad to pollute the Minds of your Majeſty's Subjects, in all parts of Your Dominions.

The meaneſt and moſt ignorant of the People, who had any degree of Curioſity and Leiſure, were then tempted to employ it in Searches, for which they were no ways qualify'd: they were furniſh'd every Day from the Preſs with Objections againſt Religion; and taught to doubt of thoſe Truths, which it had otherwiſe never once enter'd into their Hearts to queſtion.

This general Liberty of the Preſs happen'd not long after the Time, when, by reaſon of Confuſions and Diſorders that uſually attend great Changes of State, the Reins of Government were unavoidably ſlacken'd; and Parties of Men, were ſuffer'd to expreſs their mutual Reſentments, and manage their Debates againſt each other, with a freedom not often permitted, or practis'd in more quiet and ſettled Times. Mean while, the Indulgence granted to Men, of worſhiping God in their own way, incited ſome publickly, and with warmth, to eſpouſe theſe Religious Opinions, which others thought themſelves bound with equal Warmth, to oppoſe. Theſe Contentions in Matters of a Civil and ſacred Nature, bred in the Minds of Men, not well grounded in true Principles, great Perplexities and Doubts; and gave an Opportunity to thoſe, who *ſat in the Seat of the Scornful*, to promote the Intereſts of Septiciſm, and Infidelity, by making Sport with our Diviſions.

The

The Licentiouſneſs of the Stage is another Fountain, from whence the preſent Corruptions of Religion and Morality have flow'd. On our Theatres, Things Sacred and Serious have been handled after the moſt Ludicrous manner; the Prieſthood, the holy Offices, and Ceremonies of our Church have been expos'd to Scorn; Obſcenity, Blaſphemous Alluſions to Holy Writ, and various ſorts of Profaneneſs have abounded: The worſt Exmaples have been plac'd in the beſt Lights, and recommended to imitation; and the vicious Images thus painted to the Life, and ſet out with all manner of Advantage, have made ſuch Impreſſions on the minds of the Young and the Unwary, as are not eaſie to be effac'd.

For the better diffuſing the Infection, New Theatres have been rais'd; and at the opening of one of them (an expenſive and magnificent Structure) the building of Churches was impiouſly derided, as a vain and uſeleſs Work, the effect only of Superſtition and Ignorance.

God be thanked, at that very time a different Spirit prevail'd; and great Sums of Money were by publick Authority provided, and apply'd for the building, ſupporting, and adorning of Churches: And we cannot but hope, but this Glorious Work which your Majeſty, at our humble Requeſt was graciouſly pleaſed to recommend to your Parliament; in the Advancement of which, the Zeal of Your Parliament, influenced by that of Your Majeſty, hath already made ſo great a progreſs, will be ſpeedily accompliſh'd by an ample proviſion for the Wants of that kind, under which the Inhabitants of theſe two populous Cities have hitherto labour'd. They have now, for a long tract of Time, Year after Year, exceedingly increas'd, without a proportionable Increaſe of the Churches and Chapels appointed to receive them: By which means vaſt Numbers of Souls have been excluded from a poſſibility of attending on the publick Worſhip of God, and from all the Benefits of Chriſtian Inſtruction. And the natural Conſequence of this hath been, a gradual Defection from Piety and Virtue, to Irreligious Ignorance, and all manner of looſe and Licentious Living.

To the Increaſe of which, They alſo contributed, who took occaſion from the Relaxation of thoſe Laws, which made abſence from the Eſtabliſh'd Church penal, to withdraw themſelves entirely from all Religious Aſſemblies; altho' that very Act of Exemption, which gave Liberty in the one reſpect, equally reſtrain'd it, in the other.

Nor hath the long Continuance of that juſt and neceſſary War, in which Your Majeſty is now engag'd (and which we truſt God will enable

enable You to finish as Gloriously as you have hitherto carry'd it on; being unattended with Consequences prejudicial to the Interests of Religion and Goodness.

That this might not be our own Case, Your Majesty was pleas'd to use your powerful Influences with the *States of Holland*, and to employ Your Royal Bounty for the building of a Church, in which Your Subjects might serve God abroad, with the same Decency and Order as at Home, and be instructed in such Religious Principles as might preserve 'em from the Contagion of those Vices, to which a Military Life is too much exposed. But notwithstanding this Design is piously intended by Your Majesty, and so readily promoted by the liberal Contributions of Your Subjects in the Army; We cannot but lament that foreign Vices too easily learnt in the Camp have from thence spread themselves, by little and little, thro' the several Ranks of Men at Home, and occasion'd a visible increase of Luxury, Libertinism, and Profaneness. False Notions of Honour have made that reputable, which the Religion of Christ utterly condemns; and that Infamous, which it commands under the highest Penalties: So that They, who still dare to own themselves Christians, by not sending a Challenge, when affronted, or not accepting it, when sent, are really in a State of Persecution, on the Account of their strict Adherence to Christ and his Doctrine. The Prevalence of such Principles and Practises doth, in our humble Opinion, tend, not only to the Dishonour, but even to the Disbelief of the Gospel, among those, who are either persuaded, that it is lawful, and laudable, or, without such a Perswasion, determin'd, to act in Contradiction to the plain Precepts of it.

The Emissaries from *Rome* have not been wanting to lay hold of this Opportunity for the Advancement of their Cause; to which nothing is so serviceable as *Scepticism*, and looseness of Life: And these, therefore, they have always encouraged to the best of their Power. They have swarm'd in our Streets of late Years, and have been very busy in making Converts: And, since their known way of dealing in such Cases, is to bring Men round to Infallibility by the way of Infidelity; we doubt not but their subtle Arts, and restless Endeavours of this kind, may be reckon'd one Cause of the present Growth of Irreligion among us.

Other Causes have also concurr'd; As the want of a vigorous Execution of those Laws, Proclamations, and Injunctions, which were piously

piously fram'd; and the faint and ineffectual Prosecutions of some notorious Offenders: By which means, what was design'd to curb and restrain their Insolence, tended rather to heighten and nourish it.

Nor are we sensible, how much Religion hath suffer'd by vain pretences, to fathom those Depths of Divine Wisdom, which are unsearchable, and to advance nice Explications of Mysteries which are inexplicable; by the Misapplication of Mathematical Reasonings to matters of mere Revelation; by the attempts made to shew, how all the Steps taken in that great Work of Omnipotence, the Creation of the World, were to be accounted for by the known Laws of Motion; and that the Destruction of it, by the Deluge, might in like manner be explain'd. For the Tendency of such Attemps hath been, to confine the Thoughts of Men to second Causes, and to intimate, how little the Wisdom of God was concern'd in making the World.

But These, and such causes as these, having a less general and discernable Influence towards producing the Evils complain'd of; we have chosen rather to rest in the consideration of those, which are more extensive and apparent, and have been remarkably fruitful of the *Ill Consequences*, which we are next to lay before Your Majesty.

The Dishonour, which the late excessive Growth of Infidelity, Heresy, and Profaneness, hath brought on our holy Faith, on our Church, and Nation, is too great to be disregarded, and too manifest to be dissembled. The Gospel cannot but be blemished by this Reflection, That, at a Time, when the strongest Evidences of its Divine Original have been produc'd, and set in the fairest Light, so many should revolt from it. Our Ecclesiastical and Civil Constitution must needs undergo Reproach; as if we either wanted Laws to punish such Enormities, or Zeal to turn the edge of those Laws upon daring Offenders.

It is lamentable to reflect, how many Souls have been lost, by imbibing wicked Doctrines from those Books, which have been scatter'd for several Years with Impunity through this Kingdom; how many more are endanger'd by too near Approaches towards Infidelity, though they have not as yet actually arriv'd to it; what a Spirit of

Indifference and Neutrality in Religion hath been infus'd, through ſuch Vehicles, into the Minds of Men, and hath, at laſt, ſo far prevail'd, as to become the Diſtinguiſhing Character of the Age we live in.

We doubt not, but that divers of Your Majeſty's Subjects, either by the Scandal ariſing from the late obſervable Growth of Profaneneſs, or by ſharing the Contagion of it, have at laſt been perverted to Popery; and we are ſure, that many of them have been made worſe Men, and worſe Subjects, by the means of it. For infidelity, where embrac'd, cancels all the ſtrongeſt Obligations of Duty, and diſſolves thoſe Religious Bands of Obedience, by which the Thrones of Princes are beſt ſecur'd, and their Authority moſt firmly ſupported. And therefore, we cannot but obſerve to Your Majeſty, that, they, who deride Churches, and Creeds, and Myſteries, were the ſame who inſulted the Memory, and juſtify'd the Murder of the Royal Martyr; applauded the Rebellion rais'd againſt Him, and have taken a great deal of wicked Pains, in collecting and publiſhing the Works of thoſe Writers, who were the moſt declar'd and irreconcilable Enemies to Monarchy.

But the worſt Conſequence of our Impieties is, that they have made us obnoxious to the Diſpleaſure of Almighty God; who may Juſtly, on their Account, be provok'd to viſit us with his ſevereſt Judgments, by ſtopping the continued Current of Succeſs, with which he hath hitherto bleſs'd our Affairs, and delivering us into the Hands of our Enemies; by withdrawing the pure Light of his Goſpel from us, and letting in the Abominations of Popery among us.

Our only Comfort under this ſad Proſpect, is, That as far and wide as the Infection hath ſpread, there are many ſtill left, who continue untainted by it; many, who, imitating the pious Example ſet by Your Majeſty, *hold faſt the Profeſſion of their Faith without wavering*, and adorn it with all manner of Chriſtian Graces and Virtues in the midſt of a perverſe and crooked Generation. For the mighty Growth of Infidelity hath been attended with one good Conſequence, among divers ill ones; That the Zeal of devout Perſons, hath thereby been excited to do every thing, that in them lay, towards reſiſting and ſtemming this Torrent of Impiety. Nor have their Endeavours

deavours been fruitleſs; our Eyes daily ſee the publick and happy Effects of them. Divine Service, and Sacraments, have of late been oftner celebrated, and better frequented, than formerly; the Catechiſing of Youth hath been more generally practis'd, and with greater Succeſs: Vaſt Sums have been furniſh'd by private Contributors, to ſuſtain the Charge of Educating poor Children in a pious and uſeful manner; and many other new and noble Inſtitutions of Charity have been ſet on Foot, of which ſome mention was made in the Entrance of the Account, now laid before Your Majeſty.

Of theſe We already feel the good Influence, and hope, that they may hereafter prove a Remedy equal to the Diſeaſe, under which We labour. In the mean time, other Methods of redreſſing theſe great Miſchiefs may, we humbly conceive, be ſucceſsfully try'd; ſuch as the Courſe of the foregoing Reflections, and Your Majeſty's great Wiſdom and Piety have already ſuggeſted to You.

We entertain not the leaſt doubt of Your Majeſty's firm Reſolution to render the Laws, and Edicts, ſet forth for the Suppreſſion of Immorality and Profaneneſs, uſeful to that Purpoſe, by an impartial and vigorous Execution of them; and to reform the Corruptions of the Stage, which have been ſo inſtrumental in vitiating young and innocent Minds, and have given Matter of ſo juſt Offence to all ſerious and devout *Chriſtians*.

We are entirely perſuaded, that Your Majeſty will, in the moſt effectual manner, diſcountenance all ſuch Perſons, as are profligate in their Lives, or the known Abettors and Spreaders of impious Opinions, by excluding them from all Marks of Your Royal Favour.

And we promiſe our ſelves, from the happy Application of theſe Remedies, which Your Majeſty alone is able (and not more able than willing) to apply, great and durable Effects.

We

We are entirely perſuaded, that Your Majeſty will in the moſt effectual manner diſcountenance all ſuch perſons as are profligate in their Lives, or the known Abettors and Spreaders of impious Opinions; and the repeated Aſſurances which Your Majeſty (whom God long preſerve) hath been pleaſed to give to Your People, of Your Care to tranſmit the Succeſſion of the Crown in the *Proteſtant Line*, as eſtabliſh'd by Law, give us great hopes, that our Enemies of the *Romiſh Communion*, will at laſt be effectually diſcouraged from attempting the Ruin of that excellent Church, of which, under Chriſt, Your Majeſty is the Chief Governour, and glorious Defender.

With inexpreſſible Satisfaction we reflect upon the noble Proviſion made by the preſent Parliament for Fifty New Churches, and we pleaſe our ſelves with a proſpect of the Ground, which will every Day be gain'd, by this means, upon Vice and Irreligion; when all Excuſes for non-attendance on the publick Worſhip will be remov'd, and the Law, which makes thoſe, who abſtain from all ſorts of Religious Aſſemblies, ſtill obnoxious to Puniſhment, may be exerted in its utmoſt Force, without giving juſt occaſion of Complaint to any Man.

Nor are we without hope, that theſe our Synodical Aſſemblies, regularly and conſtantly held, may be one uſeful means of checking the Attempts of profane Men, and preventing the Growth of pernicious Errors. Eſpecially, if, by the Authority, or Intervention of ſuch Synods, ſome way might be found to reſtore the Diſcipline of the Church, now too much relax'd and decay'd, to its priſtine Life and Vigor; and to ſtrengthen the ordinary Juriſdiction of Eccleſiaſtical Courts, now too much reſtrain'd and infeebled: Both which Ends, as far as they ſhall appear to be ſubſervient to the Intereſts of Religion and Vertue, and no ways to interfere with the Laws and Liberties of our Country, We do not, under the propitious Influence of Your Majeſty's Adminiſtration, deſpair of attaining.

But

But that, for which we at preſent, in moſt earneſt, and moſt humble manner addreſs our ſelves to Your Majeſty, is, That by Your Royal Interpoſition, an Act may be obtain'd, for reſtraining the preſent exceſſive and ſcandalous Liberty of Printing wicked Books at Home, or importing the like from abroad, in ſuch manner, as to the Wiſdom of Your Majeſty and Your Parliament ſhall ſeem moſt Expedient. For, as we take this to have been the chief Source and Cauſe of theſe Evils, whereof we now complain; ſo we queſtion not, but that the Removal of it wou'd be the moſt ſpeedy and effectual Cure of them.

Our daily and fervent Prayer to God is, That Your Majeſty may be the happy Inſtrument of theſe, and many other Bleſſings, to this Church and State; That You may be as Proſperous in Your Deſigns againſt Infidelity, and Vice, here at Home, as You have been in all Your Undertakings againſt the common Enemy Abroad; and may, by that means, add, what alone is wanting to compleat the Glory, and crown the Succeſſes of Your ever memorable Reign.

FINIS.

But that, for which we at prefent, in moft earneft, and moft humble manner addreſs our ſelves to Your Majeſty, is, That by Your Royal Interpoſition, an Act may be obtain'd, for reſtraining the preſent exceſſive and ſcandalous Liberty of Printing wicked Books at Home, or importing the like from abroad, in ſuch manner, as to the Wiſdom of Your Majeſty and Your Parliament ſhall ſeem moſt Expedient. For, as we take this to have been the chief Source and Cauſe of thoſe Evils, whereof we now complain; ſo we queſtion not, but that the Removal of it would be the moſt ſpeedy and effectual Cure of them.

Our daily and fervent Prayer to God is, That Your Majeſty may be the happy Inſtrument of thoſe, and many other Bleſſings to this Church and State; That Your may be as Proſperous in Your Deſigns againſt Infidelity, and Vice, here at Home, as You have been in all Your Undertakings againſt the common Enemy Abroad; and may, by that means, add, what alone is wanting to compleat the Glory, and crown the Succeſſes of Your ever memorable Reign.

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